

Harpswell Conservation Commission
Minutes for Special Meeting January 7, 2008, 9:00 AM
Municipal Office Building, Mountain Road, Harpswell, Maine

Members present: Mary Ann Nahf (chair), Tony Barrett, Ann Nemrow, Pat L'Heureux, Deirdre Strachan.

Also present: Carol Tukey (Town Planner), Fred Dillon, FB Environmental (Consultant)

1. **Welcome and introduction of Carol Tukey, Town Planner.** Worked in planning 12 years, in Cumberland, Pennsylvania, and Topsham.
2. **Major issues discussed with Fred were:**
 - **Weighting of themes/factors.** The responses of participants in the two forums are currently being used to weight the themes. However, these responses are different than the results of the Recreation and Open Space Survey. The survey is more representative of the opinions of residents of Harpswell as it is based on a scientific sample of over 500 residents. Unfortunately, converting the results of the survey to our themes is difficult. We therefore resolved to use equal weights (20% each) for our five themes. **Action: Fred will rerun the data with equal weights for the five themes for discussion in our Jan 15 meeting.**
 - **Priorities:** During the first analysis, Fred divided the priorities equally as follows: high (66-100), medium (34-66) and low (0-33). Using these ranges, the results show that 3% of the land is high priority for protection, 48% for medium protection and 21% for low protection. We decided to change the ranges as follows: high (50-100), medium (25-49) and low (0-24). **Action: Fred will rerun the data using different cut off points/ranges for high, medium and low priorities for conservation for discussion in our Jan 15 meeting.**
3. **How much Open Space is enough?** We discussed how to determine how much open space in a town is enough. Harpswell has a total of 16% of its land constrained with 8.5% of this fully protected. We need data from other towns for comparison but it is difficult to get. Tony indicated that in Phippsburg has a total of 27% protected, including the Basin. Without the recent gift of the land around the Basin, it has 19% protected.
4. **Potable Water.** Potable water is of highest priority to Harpswell residents. In our analysis, we need to pull out potable water, including high yield wells, as a separate function. **Action: Fred will rerun the data, giving high priority to high yield wells.**
5. **Scenic Views:** We need to figure out what has changed since 1987 and write up an analysis for the OSP. The HCC analysis of scenic views in Harpswell is car-centric. Ann Nemrow expressed concern about this factor. Carol noted that if the 2 maps are to be used as a comparison of change the format should be the same. We need to expand the analysis to include other scenic areas. **Action: HCC do analysis of scenic areas. Determine how the maps are going to be used.**
6. **Appendix 10:** We need to know what parts of this document are useful to Harpswell
7. **Map 6:** This map is an overlay/compilation of the other maps. We need to add another map that shows the land that is currently preserved/constrained in Harpswell in relationship to Map 6. Fred said that the WIF data was used to indicate wetlands. **Action: Fred to prepare another map with the priorities for conservation in relationship to the lands already constrained. Will also investigate using the 1999 Wetlands Study to Selectmen Report in place of the WIF data.**

8. **Presentation on Open Space to other committees and selectmen:** Tony brought up the thought of developing a presentation outline to use as we talk to other town committees and the selectmen. He gave us a potential outline for a presentation to review with the thought that it will be helpful as we begin to rethink the format and rewrite of the draft plan. **Action: HCC needs to develop a presentation on open space.**
9. **Summary:** We need to develop a set of specific recommendations, perhaps for the next 1 – 5 years, of **what** we can do as a town to protect open space, including **how to finance** the initiatives. Possible recommendations include maintaining the rural character, supporting the concept of village areas, updating ordinances, preserving unfragmented parcels, working jointly with HHLT as the town agent for protection of land and developing an Open Space Fund. We need to determine what has worked to date.
Action: HCC must prepare a specific set of recommendations on Open Space.
10. **Rewrite and Preparation of OSP:** As part of the discussion on volume and magnitude of detail, Carol requested Fred to add an Executive Summary to the report. HCC will have an important role in rewriting and preparing the final open space plan document. As a first step, Mary Ann will develop an updated outline for the document.. FB Environmental's contract will be fulfilled when the presentation of the final draft plan is given to the Selectmen & townspeople. Carol & Mary Ann will meet with Kristi to discuss the logistics of this.

Adjourned at about 11:10 AM

Next meeting January 15th at 3:30 PM (Regular Meeting)

Respectfully submitted, Deirdre Strachan & Mary Ann Nahf, Secretaries pro tem